

Hermann, Missouri



DOWNTOWN
REVITALIZATION &
ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE FOR
MISSOURI



DESTINATION
ASSESSMENT

MAY 2009



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOR MISSOURI (DREAM) PROGRAM SPONSORS:



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INTRODUCTION

The DREAM Initiative concentrates efforts on downtown revitalization because the overall health of the community is greatly influenced by the vitality and viability of its downtown. Moreover, downtown reflects the unique attributes of a community—its heritage, its people and its future. While much of America becomes culturally homogenized, our downtowns should retain their unique identity and reflect the incredible diversity contained within the American story. For tourists, downtowns embody the character of the community and represent hidden treasures awaiting discovery.

The DREAM Initiative recognizes that downtown exists within a larger context. Tourists may visit a city for destinations outside downtown, such as a nearby natural or historic attraction, but downtown should be a part of their adventure. In order for downtown to be viable as a tourist destination it must offer unique shopping and dining opportunities and recreational opportunities.

The Destination Assessment component of the DREAM Initiative will help Hermann better understand its potential to derive benefits from tourism. Many communities already enjoy a significant economic impact from tourism, while others have fledgling tourist industries. In either case, the assessment will help formulate an aspirational *and* realistic vision for the future. Recommendations will address potential synergies among existing features to capitalize on Hermann’ Downtown and the surrounding area’s tourism assets.



The “Destination Assessment Team” is a collaborative effort among representatives of PGAV, the Missouri Division of Tourism, and the Missouri Arts Council. The findings and recommendations contained within the Destination Assessment, while primarily prepared by PGAV, represent a coordinated effort to address the “tourist” or “visitor” experience from independent consultants and key State agencies involved in tourism and the arts. It is anticipated that the Missouri Division of Tourism and the Missouri Arts Council will play an ongoing role in providing technical and financial resources, as applicable.

This assessment will assume, as numerous Hermann officials, residents, and businesses noted in early meetings, that the style of tourism Hermann desires to promote is of a controlled, sustainable, orderly nature. The City would like to avoid the connotative meanings attached to the word ‘tourist’ and are more interested in the characteristics described by the word ‘visitor’.



THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM



A vibrant tourism trade offers many potential benefits to a community. Tourism can help enhance the image of an area, increase local pride, and improve quality of life. As an industry, tourism is recognized as an important component of a diverse economy providing employment, redevelopment, and investment opportunity. All together, tourism can help to build a distinctive, unique, and productive community.

The economic benefits of tourism include job creation, as well as increased retail sales generation, essentially bringing new money into the community.

The potential new retail sales from tourism can help to counter the changing nature of the retail environment, which has generally lead to a decline in sales tax revenues over the last few decades. While this effect is felt community-wide, it has had a particularly strong impact on many small Downtowns. The attraction of new money to the community through tourism is an effective strategy to deal with the financial gap left by these trends as new money travels into and circulates throughout the community.

The positive effects of a successful tourism industry resonate through many business sectors, including non tourism related businesses and the local community. The positive impacts will be felt by local businesses and residents alike. Local residents will benefit from added or improved visitor services and infrastructure, increased employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, and improved shopping convenience and increased choice. A well balanced mix of retail and services will make Downtown a destination, attractive to residents, visitors, and investors.

In light of the far-reaching impacts of a successful tourism industry, and the size of the local industry, tourism should be viewed as a strategic sector in Hermann’s economic future. Any Economic Development strategy for Hermann should specifically address the tourism industry and its importance to the local economy.



ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The Destination Assessment provides a snapshot of the tourism industry operating community-wide, with a focus on Downtown. The “rapid assessment” process employed consists of reviewing existing data and marketing materials, as well as, conducting field work, visiting the community, its key destinations, and meeting with tourism leaders. This report and the recommendations contained herein should serve as a foundation, providing strategic direction for Hermann as it moves toward destination success. Understanding the framework used to evaluate Hermann’s destination potential will provide a useful context for the recommendations and suggestions for improvement. The Destination Assessment will identify areas in need of improvement that will overlap with other DREAM Initiative tasks. Those tasks will be noted and addressed in greater detail in their corresponding analyses.

Development of a tourism enhancement strategy, just as any business or product development strategy, begins with an evaluation of the relationship between product and customer in a competitive marketplace. The analysis of these relationships results in the development or identification of a competitive advantage. A competitive advantage gives a community an edge over its rivals and an ability to generate greater success. The more sustainable the competitive advantage, the more difficult it is for competitors to neutralize the advantage. Competitors in this scenario are other communities that are attempting to attract in whole, or large part, the same target market.

Product

For the purposes of this analysis the product is Downtown, its amenities and environ including: businesses, restaurants, museums, infrastructure, people, streets, sidewalks, parks, events, etc. Downtown is evaluated in terms of a theme park or resort, striving to provide the same level of services. Downtown needs a balance of businesses and amenities that address, at a minimum, the basic needs of customers. A key to a successful product is maintaining focus on the primary product, service, or destination strengths, while at the same time adapting to changes and taking advantage of opportunities.

Customer

The customer, in this evaluation, is the visitor or patron including residents of the community, neighboring areas, traditional tourists, etc. The community must understand who their current customers are, who is currently visiting Downtown and why, as well as who, they might be able to target and how. To understand and target customers, it is helpful to categorize visitors. A common categorization of visitors is by the reason for their visit:

Business Travelers—Most likely to travel during the week, driven by businesses, primarily basic needs of lodging, restaurants, services, gift shopping, and evening entertainment, potential to impress and return for pleasure.

Family Travelers—Most likely to travel during the weekend, driven by relatives, less likely to need lodging, potential

needs of services and restaurants, general shopping.

Ethnic and Cultural Seekers—Looking for exposure to new experiences, development, and education. Interested in the areas 'way of life' and people. Adventurous and looking for more than basic needs. Museums, galleries, concerts, festivals, and performances. Likely to shop for unique items.

Heritage and Passive Recreation Enthusiasts—This visitor enjoys the scenery and feel of the area more than the interaction with the people. They are more inwardly focused and reflective. Their needs are similar to the culture seeker, but are just as likely to enjoy a drive through town to look at architecture or a walk in the local parks.

Active Outdoor Adventurers—Intense enjoyers of the parks and natural areas. These sportsmen enjoy a wide variety and are not always young. Outdoorsmen, boaters, hikers, or golfers; they are on the move. They are devoted and spend money on their chosen sport.

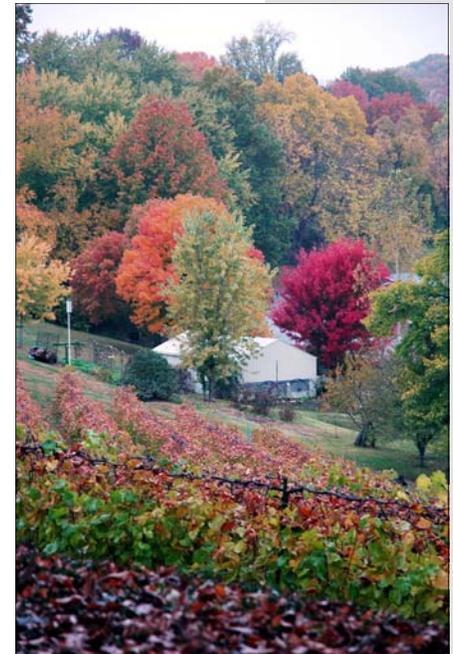
Urban Entertainment—The shoppers, team sport spectators, college visitors, night owls, or amusement park attendees. They tend to travel in groups and have a higher expendable income. Internet connectivity and cell phone access is important to them.

Market Positioning and Brand

Once an understanding is reached on exactly what the product is and who the customers or target markets are, the focus turns to identifying the market positioning. An important component of a competitive advantage is a distinct market positioning and brand—something that draws on the strengths of the destination, its authenticity, and leverages customers' desire for unique experiences.

It is essential to understand how customers currently perceive the destination, especially relative to competitors. This perception is the community's image or brand. The destination must craft a strategy that builds on the positive aspects of its current image and, if necessary, repositions it to a more advantageous and competitive position. Repositioning takes time, patience and persistence as it typically involves modifying previously held perceptions about your destination.

Customers carry a preconceived idea of the destination's brand. The brand represents what people think of you—your image. The destination's brand is important as it is essentially a promise to provide a product or service in a consistent way.



Destination brands have four distinct components that make up brand image in the mind of the customer. Each component represents an opportunity to differentiate from competition and offer a unique consumer benefit. Destinations can reach their maximum potential by leveraging all four components.

REALM ONE—PLACE:

If you visit the Empire State Building, you go to a building with the city surrounding it. Up at the observation tower, the **place** becomes an oasis high above bustling Manhattan. What benefits does the place provide for the guest? Some people like the high energy feeling of being in the city, but they may also like taking a break from the intensity. People go to a destination. It exists in a physical place. A destination should try to get the most out of the power of its place.

REALM TWO—EXPERIENCE:

Hike in the canyon. Ride the coaster. Attend a show. People want to *do* something at a destination—something unique, something to brag about, or something to share. The experience of a destination can provide key benefits to guests and a fundamental part of its brand. A destination can reach its full potential when it promotes the benefits of a unique experience and delivers.

REALM THREE—MINDSET:

Sometimes a destination epitomizes or evokes an attitude, value, or mindset that has meaning beyond the physical limits of the site. Colonial Williamsburg set out to “own” the concept of Colonial America, and people might feel more patriotic just thinking about it. When a destination can symbolize an aspirational concept, it can form a powerful connection with its guests. The destination becomes a touchstone for the concept and people return to renew their connection with it.

REALM FOUR—ORGANIZATION:

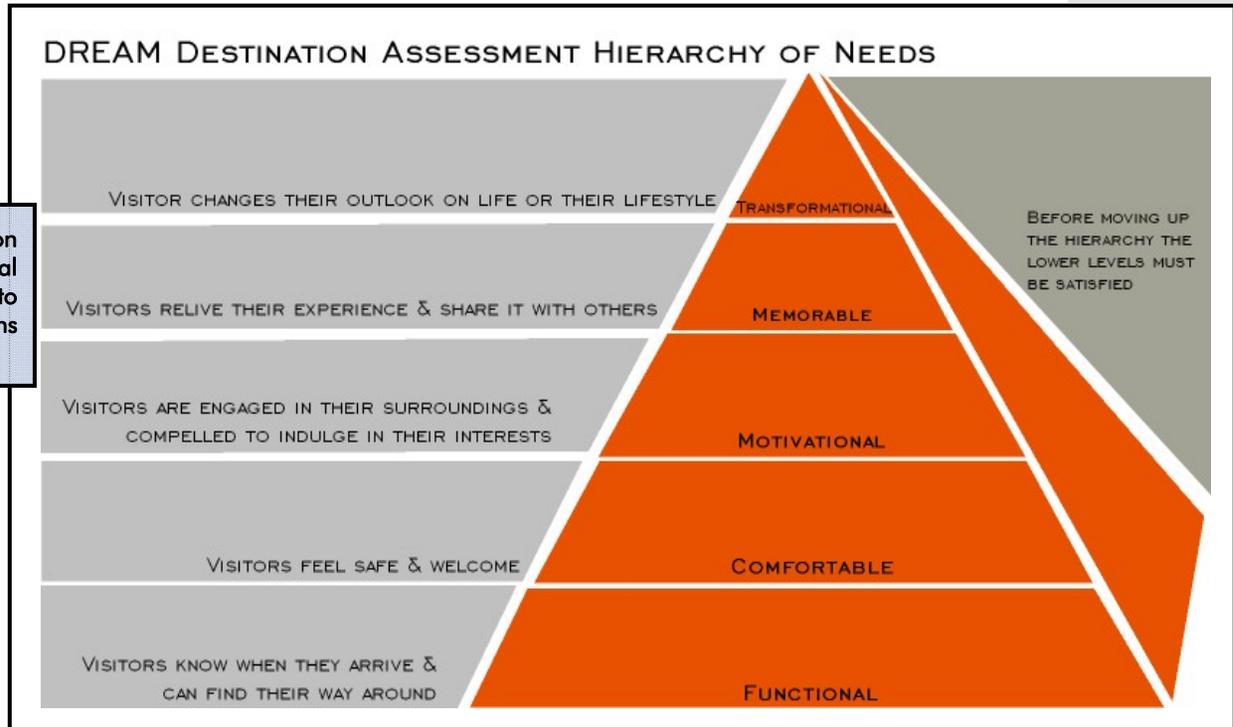
What role does the organization behind the destination play in the brand? The Niagara Parks emblem conveys tremendous trust among regional guests who want to spend their money with the organization that helps preserve the nature and heritage of Niagara Falls. The organizational dimension of a destination may also make a big difference to future employees, donors, business partners, granting agencies, or other organizations. People want to associate with a cause or organization they feel good about, one that expresses their own values and aspirations.

When people think of your destination, do they long to be in the place, get excited by the experience, aspire to the values represented, and trust the organization behind it? When you can answer ‘yes’ to all four, people will attribute a high value to your destination brand. That value is your destinations’ competitive advantage, which relates directly to attendance and financial success.

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Destinations and, in a larger sense, downtowns are basically customer-oriented businesses and therefore should always take the customer point-of-view. As stated earlier, when destinations conduct product development and determine marketing decisions they must address what the customer wants and needs. During the Destination Assessment Kick-Off Meeting, the Destination Assessment Team introduced the concept of a destination consumer “Hierarchy of Needs,” which hypothesizes that customers must have their most basic needs met before they can attain higher levels of fulfillment. This customer-focused theme will recur throughout the recommendations for each community.

For the purposes of this Destination Assessment, PGAV uses the hierarchical scheme shown here, listed from bottom to top, to illustrate and describe the motivations of the typical, “downtown” Missouri tourist.



There are a great number of reasons or desires that drive an individual consumer’s decision to travel and their choice of destination. The “Hierarchy of Needs” describes the requirements a typical visitor has to have met in order for them to have a fulfilling destination experience. Questions a destination community may ask themselves regarding whether or not their community’s destination assets meet these needs are:

Questions a destination community may ask themselves regarding whether or not their community’s destination assets meet these needs are:

1. Functional: Does the City provide adequate wayfinding to make travel throughout the area easy and somewhat intuitive? Do visitors know when they have “arrived”? Does the City adequately provide basic comforts, such as parking, bathrooms, and a place to rest? Is information about destinations and events easily attainable?

2. **Comfortable:** Is the downtown pedestrian friendly and well lit? Are the building facades and streetscape designs aesthetically pleasing? Are numerous lodging and dining options present throughout the municipality? Does the downtown provide adequate comforts so that the visitor can relax and get away from home?
3. **Motivational:** Does the downtown provide visitors with activities in which to participate? What will move the visitor to get out of their car and get involved? Does the downtown provide a chance to learn, interact with others, and an opportunity for adventure or escape?
4. **Memorable:** Does the downtown leave the visitor with positive memories? Do visitors repeatedly return to downtown? Do visitors recommend a visit to downtown to others? Is there positive word-of-mouth about downtown?
5. **Transformational:** If the City meets the aforementioned needs, then they've created a fulfilling experience to the visitor, which, hopefully, will positively change the visitor; thus imbuing the visitor with not only a valuable rejuvenative experience, but also a new and positive outlook on life. The visitor will want to return to and reconnect with the destination to renew that positive outlook in the future. The visitor will actively seek to bring others and share the rejuvenative experience.

In the case of a visit to a destination like a resort, zoo, or theme park, a single organization manages the tourist experience to ensure a "seamless" experience; one that flows smoothly and consistently from parking and restrooms to attractions, food and shopping without breaks in the "brand." People have come to expect this level of product and service. Destination communities would benefit from emulating this model to the degree they can considering the complexity of their destination environment (i.e. multiple tourism product owners and interests). For example, Destination communities can develop organizational structures that support a coordinated aesthetic presentation of downtown; manage a consistent and unified marketing plan; administer special event planning; and guide businesses towards consistent business standards (i.e. uniform business hours).

Although Destination Assessment focuses on tourism and arts, many of the recommendations promise to improve quality of life for both visitors and residents. Conversely, many of the recommendations in other parts of the overall DREAM initiative, such as streetscape improvements and traffic management will provide essential infrastructure to support tourism. This synergy of benefits illustrates the key strategy of the initiative—that an integrated approach to planning and implementation will achieve the best results for Hermann.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT AND ASSESSMENT EXPERIENCE

ASSESSMENT VISIT EXPERIENCE

The approach to Hermann from any direction is scenic and provides visitors with a sense of escape and “get-away”. Visitors feel they are far removed from the big city, strip malls and interstate highways. For most visitors, there are several picturesque and easy routes into Hermann. It is important to note that some routes lead visitors through other small towns that also boast wineries, such as Augusta and New Haven, Missouri.

The first impression a visitor has of a destination is typically a lasting impression. On first impression, Hermann appears to be a quaint, small town. The storefronts of the shops and restaurants are a mix of new and attractive displays and older more run-down displays. The Missouri River is easily visible from Main Street, and enhances the appearance that Hermann is a small town nestled in the natural beauty and hills of Missouri’s wine country; however, it does not feel like a “river town.”

All existing major signage welcoming visitors into Hermann is placed by the wineries, and their purpose is to provide directions to that specific winery. The Destination Assessment Team found no city-sponsored or Hermann-themed signs welcoming visitors at any entrance to Hermann. In contrast, the brown state-placed attractions signs along Interstate 70 advertising the “Deutschheim Historic Site” in Hermann do not promote any other attractions or brand of Hermann.

The Hermann Visitor Center, located on one of the main thoroughfares into town, appears only as one of several storefronts along the wide Market Street. The Destination Assessment Team had to look hard to find the Visitor Center as the signage was not very prominent, the storefront blended in with adjacent businesses, and it shared space with the Chamber of Commerce. Although friendly and full of information, it did not match the image of Hermann presented in print literature and websites. Additionally, parking, public restrooms and a place to stop and “refresh” were not easily found.



As is the case with most visitors, the wineries were the focus of the Destination Assessment visit and the first places visited by the Destination Assessment Team upon entering Hermann. Each winery has its own character; and all were welcoming with their own style of European charm. The Missouri River banked by vineyards and rolling hills creates romantic settings and picturesque views. The opportunity to enjoy lunch or a snack at the winery extends the stay and provides a much appreciated dining option. The wineries and the people were enjoyable to meet.

Bed & Breakfasts (B&B's) are the main form of lodging for visitors. There are many B&Bs located in downtown as well as the surrounding area. The B&Bs add to the European charm of the town, offering unique lodging to enhance the visitors experience. The cost and quality of the B&Bs range from modest and affordable to luxurious and expensive. The B&B experience fits well with the setting and positioning of Hermann. However, a B&B style of lodging is not for everyone, and there are few hotels or motels in the area.

Hermann promotes a varied selection of restaurants, however the dining options are limited in choice and hours of operation. The Destination Assessment Team felt the length of a stay would be limited due to the few dining choices available. Some wineries offer different levels of food service, which provides a convenient opportunity to enjoy food with wine.



PERCEPTIONS, UNDERSTANDING & CURRENT POSITIONING

The town of Hermann is proud of its German heritage and promotes its mix of history, wineries, museums and B&Bs to visitors. As first-time visitors to Hermann, the Destination Assessment Team initially perceived Hermann’s position in the destination market as a quaint, historic town with German history and traditions – most significantly wine-making.

Upon reflection, the Destination Assessment Team views Hermann as a town facing challenges, but with many strengths and opportunities to improve its positioning and branding, illustrating Hermann as a distinct and significant destination within Missouri wine country.

Travel to Hermann is, in large part, event-driven. There are events and festivals throughout the year that attract visitors to Hermann, such as Maifest, Oktoberfest and Hermann Wine Trails. These events complement the surrounding wineries, and provide a good reason for visitors to stay all-day or overnight.



Hermann also hosts numerous theatrical shows, offers unique shopping featuring arts and crafts, and utilizes the Katy Trail and other attractions for visitors. The arts and theatre offerings appeal to residents of Hermann; as well as tourists; these attractions serve to complement the main reason visitors come to Hermann – the Wineries. They add to the array of activities visitors can do after visiting a winery or attending a festival.

“German in every particular” leads many of the descriptions of Hermann. Elements of Hermann’s German heritage pepper the town – from names of shops and wineries to the architectural features on buildings in the downtown. The Deutschheim State Historic Site and the German School Museum are two of the prominent historic sites in Hermann. They add to the authenticity of German heritage and provide distinctive character to the town, complementing other features.

Hermann’s wineries and B&Bs provide the majority of demand for tourism and travel to Hermann. The unique combination and critical mass of both wineries and B&Bs make up a large component of Hermann’s demand generation. Visiting a winery located in the natural beauty of the region and spending time with the friendly locals and B&B owners provides the basis for a great tourism experience.



MISSOURI RIVER VALLEY WINE "REGIONS" ASSETS

The City's position as a significant component of the Missouri River Valley wine region and associated wine trails is a tremendous asset to the City's destination "product". The State has made a significant investment in the promotion and production of wine-making and the winery experience. This important industry to the State, along with the City's proximity to the St. Louis metropolitan region, provides a unique opportunity for broadening the City's destination appeal. Exhibits depicting the wine trails and Hermann's proximity to Missouri wineries are located in Appendix.

In smaller wine-producing states such as Missouri, tourism surrounding the wine experience often provides a larger economic benefit than the actual retail sale of the wine produced, such as California wineries. Therefore, the "winemaking and winery experience" become the centerpiece for tourism of communities located in proximity to wineries. Successful "wine tourism" regions often see ancillary businesses locate to support the core winery experience. These businesses include health spas, restaurants, bed and breakfast accommodations, horse rides, bicycling, "outdoor recreation" and balloon rides. Note that these types of businesses are also "experiential" in nature—wine tourists often make decisions based on their anticipated "experience" as much as the quality and price of wine (although these items are a factor for some wine tourists). The relationship of wine to other travel interests or special-interest travel is well documented. The City appears advantaged in positioning itself with the following "wine pairings":

Wine and Food: Most wine tourism regions offer wine and food together. The historic "pairing" of these offerings makes them a natural fit (plus many people believe wine tastes better with food). The City's position in this regard could encourage the ongoing attraction and development of restaurants in Downtown, a "wine tasting" venue, and a food/wine tourism packaging.

Wine and Cultural Tourism: Cultural tourists often seek out the novelty or the educational experience of destinations. The City is well positioned to offer cultural tourism paired with the winery experience. This is particularly true considering the abundance of cultural amenities included in downtown and the new developments along the Gutenberg corridor.



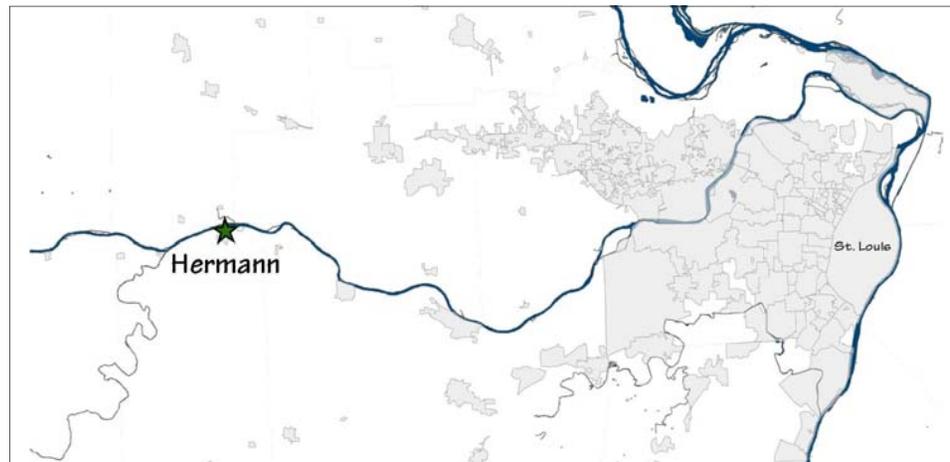
Nestled in the Heart of Missouri Wine Country, Hermann is a picture-book 19th century village where visitors can partake of an Old World Charm. Indulge yourself in our wineries, Bed & Breakfasts, restaurants, historic architecture, specialty shops, Katy Trail, golf course or just picnic at our Riverfront Park and watch the Missouri River lazily roll past.

(www.hermanmo.info, Home Page, 2007)

Wine and Art: The relationship between wine and art is as much a “cultural” phenomenon as a demographic one. Wine and art have historically been associated through the traditions of European wine-making and artistic creativity. In contemporary times, art has become a primary concern for “marketing” wine-labels have become as much a statement about the wine as the wine itself. Many wine tourists are typically wealthier and often seek out unique art within wine regions. The city should try and capitalize more on this type of wine pairing.

Wine and the Landscape: The Missouri River Valley offers tremendous natural vistas and beautiful scenery along Highways 94 and 100. The Katy Trail provides a truly unique recreation asset within the wine region. Boaters along the Missouri River (while not as frequent as it could be) take in the serenity of the River views. Downtown Hermann offers one of the most opportune vantage points to take in the Missouri River and the valley beyond. Many wine tourists are equally inspired by the surrounding landscape of the wine region for recreation, relaxation, or ecological connection. Hermann’s proximity to the St. Louis region presents opportunities for “urban” tourists to venture into a more agrarian setting while maintaining access to the accoutrements of urban living– shopping, dining, culture and art.

The success of Hermann’s “wine tourism” strategy is partially dependent on the success of cooperation among the Missouri River Valley wineries and the neighboring cities sharing in the wine tourism opportunities that are present.



VISITOR PROFILE

Most visitors travel to Hermann for a weekend getaway or to attend events, such as Maifest or Oktoberfest. The typical visitors to Hermann are adults over 21 years of age, traveling as couples or in groups. Some families also visit, but activities are mostly oriented towards adults. In addition, the predominant Bed & Breakfast form of lodging favors adults and couples, and is typically not conducive to family stays.

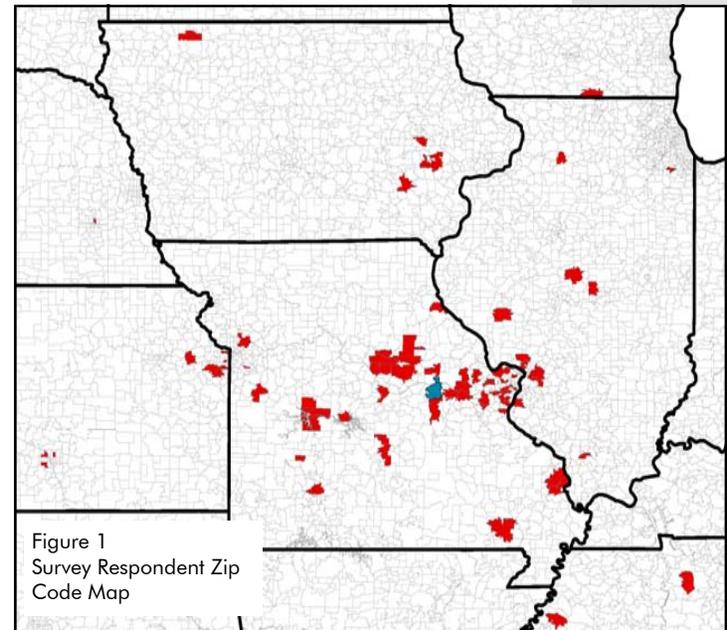
Visitors typically travel by personal vehicles or buses. However, there are also a significant number of visitors traveling in RV's and camping in Hermann's parks. Additionally, there are a small number of visitors who arrive on bicycle via the Katy Trail and by train.

In late 2007, the DREAM Initiative conducted a Visitor's Survey of visitors to Hermann. Survey responses were gathered during special events held during special events downtown, therefore most respondents indicated that their reason for visiting Hermann was to attend a special event. A complete copy of the Hermann Visitor Survey Results is available from The City of Hermann. Interesting responses include:

- 49% of respondents indicated they had visited downtown Hermann to attend a special event
- 12.8% of respondents said they visit downtown once a month or more. 62.5% said they visit downtown more than once a year, but less than once a month.
- Dining & Shopping are among the top two reasons of respondents indicated they were planning to visit downtown.
- 30% of respondents thought they would spend at least \$100 on their visit to downtown & another 25% stated they would spend \$200 or more.
- A larger majority respondents (83%) stated they do not bring children under the age of 18 with them to downtown Hermann, and a majority of those who visit are between ages 35-64 (79%).
- 63.13% of respondents thought downtown was "very" or easy to navigate.



- 58.5% of respondents thought the downtown business hours “very” or “somewhat” convenient.
- Less than 20% of respondents felt that downtown parking was “somewhat” or “very” inconvenient .
- 38.2 % of the respondents were staying with friends or relatives.
- A majority of respondents (39%) felt that “more/better restaurants ” would make them more likely to visit downtown. Other answers included a specific type of shop. (in order; clothing stores, general shops, specialty/upscale shops, antique & coffee shops)
- “More special events”, “bands/live concerts”, “family events”, and “more restaurants” were the top responses for recreation or entertainment opportunities likely to make a visitor come to downtown.
- “Renovation of historic buildings”, “ benches & more green space” ,“more parking”, and “new or better sidewalks” were the top physical improvements indicated by respondents.
- Over 50% of those who visit have an income between \$50,000 to \$99,000.
- The most likely respondents to stay overnight had incomes greater than \$75,000, stayed in B&B’s, and belonged to age groups 18-34 or 50-64
- Respondents were asked their primary zip code and Figure 1 illustrates those results



REACHING DESTINATION POTENTIAL

General “Brand” Strategy



Hermann’s Downtown district features a vibrant Main Street, a rich variety of restaurants and businesses, and entertaining events that welcome residents and visitors to Downtown Hermann throughout the year. There are a range of attractions and events appealing to adult visitors within the area. In particular, the combination of wineries, galleries and shops provide an integrated “destination experience” by virtue of combining unique beauty, history, socialization and recreation. In addition, Hermann has several local attractions that appeal to families, such as Deutsheim State Historic Site, German School Museum, Gasconade County Historical Society Archives.



SUGGESTED POSITIONING

Hermann: A Romantic Getaway

Hermann is neither the only small town or river town in Missouri, nor is it the only town with wineries in its region, and faces destination competition on both accounts. However, the unique combination of these historic, small, river-town and oenological attributes distinguish Hermann from other towns in Missouri, as Hermann possesses an authentic German heritage and European charm; it is nestled on a hill surrounded by acres of vineyards, overlooking the Missouri River; and it is host to many quality B&Bs that cater to a personal and intimate experience for guests.



Hermann has an opportunity to position itself as *the romantic getaway capital* for Missouri. The beautiful wine-country setting and elegant B&B choices make Hermann an ideal place for wedding and romantic get-aways for couples. Hermann already possesses an attractive mix of wineries, events, and character that can be repositioned or improved to promote Hermann as a romantic get-away destination.

This type of positioning offers a number of economic benefits, as romance can be marketed year-round and is very close to recession proof.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

There are different levels of recommendations that Hermann can follow in order to reach its destination potential. Improvements can range from better integration of existing community resources to developing excellent customer service and guest practices common to successful destinations. Moreover, these steps will reinforce its position and “romance brand.” Addressing basic needs of visitors and coordination of existing resources and attractions can have a significant impact in helping Hermann realize its potential.



Clarify Visitor Center Brand and Improve Visibility

Providing information to visitors is a vital component of a successful destination. The Visitor Center in Hermann needs to be improved and the availability of information expanded. The Visitor’s Center and accompanying information should be easy to locate for any visitor traveling by any means. One way to accomplish this is through improved wayfinding and signage, a simple and cost effective solution. The information from the Visitor Center should be available 24/7 with brochures made available outside the Visitor’s Center when it is closed. Furthermore, information should be placed in additional strategic locations. Consideration should be given to major transportation entryways, as well as major attractions.

A long term goal should be to relocate the Visitor’s Center to the historic firehouse at the intersection of Highway 100 and 19. This location is central to the proposed Katy Trail bike stop, historic sites, and new bridge has great visibility. This

recommendation is conditional based on the availability of parking, improved traffic calming, and cost of redevelopment.

Improve Signage and Wayfinding

It is important that the City establish a sense of place, define the boundaries of historic Downtown Hermann, and promote the brand of Downtown Hermann. The City should not rely on the signage and billboards advertising local wineries as the welcoming signage and wayfinding for Hermann. The signage for these attractions adds to the impression that Hermann is vital and has many activities, but does not address the comprehensive needs of Downtown. Signage and wayfinding should be simple and clear providing direction to the historic downtown area and guide visitors throughout its attractions.



Provide Public Amenities for Visitors

Access to public restrooms is a basic need and important to creating a seamless experience. This is particularly important in consideration of the fact that Hermann hosts many events and festivals in the downtown area. Public restrooms can be located in conjunction with the Visitor’s Center and public information kiosks. Furthermore, the facilities will provide shelter, a place to rest, and possibly the opportunity to purchase simple conveniences.

Improve Streetscapes and Buildings



First impressions make for lasting impressions, and the first impressions of downtown will be the streetscapes and buildings. Buildings and infrastructure in the historic Downtown should be improved to provide the visitor, and residents, with a more pleasant experience. Streetscapes should be improved with attention paid to wayfinding, sidewalk repair, benches, lighting, and beautification. Storefronts and deteriorated residences in the downtown area should be restored with consideration given to the European charm, historic qualities of downtown, and the branding efforts. Improving these elements will improve visitors’ first impressions as well as the whole downtown experience for visitors and residents.



Integrate Activities of Wineries, Retailers, and Attractions

Hermann has a diverse mix of attractions and character that make it a unique destination; however these attractions must work in concert in order to be successful. A simple way to improve the integration is through increased coordination of visitor-oriented retailers, service providers, attractions, and event activities. It is important that all businesses in Hermann work together to provide visitors with a seamless experience. The wineries may provide the main attraction, but only through the coordination of all businesses can the basic and higher level needs of a visitor be met. Improved communication and coordination can help retailers and attractions develop similar hours of operation to encourage visitors to extend their stay, and provide a seamless experience while better meeting visitors

needs.

Increase Number of Attractions and Retail Offerings

Tourism in Hermann is mainly driven by its events and wineries, thus limited by its number of festivals and wineries. Moreover, there are a limited number of activities for visitors to do after the festival ends or the wineries close. With limited restaurant offerings, retailers closing their doors around 5:00PM, and no movie theatres, there are truly few other activities to keep visitors in town beyond their main purpose.

Attention should be paid to the number and variety of shops and restaurants within the historic Downtown. Filling empty storefronts, with particular attention to the types of retailer, will help create a more seamless shopping experience. New and existing stores should offer goods that complement the needs of visitors as well as residents.

The 'correct' mix of businesses for downtown is the mix that works at any given point in time. This will be different for every community and will change. This Destination Assessment, coupled with the DREAM Retail Market Analysis, will identify retail gaps and make suggestions for current deficiencies in the Hermann downtown, but it is more vital that the community be prepared to act on future opportunities and adjust its strategies to exploit growth opportunities.

A procedure should be put in place to inventory the downtown business mix annually, and this information should be shared with the public. Targeted retail sectors can be promoted and contacted. Business types that support the desired positioning of downtown and address deficiencies in the Hierarchy of Needs should be top priority. Specific types of businesses that might improve Hermann's downtown are noted later in this assessment. Given the goal of capturing visitor spending, general examples of retailers and products (other than the obvious examples of lodging, restaurants, and pubs) can be suggested.

Retail Operations Improvement

The shops and restaurants in Downtown Hermann can benefit greatly by improving their retail operations and productivity. This can be accomplished through a variety of means, including increasing communication, improving product offerings and displays, and coordinating hours and events

Retailers should modify or expand their product offerings to address the needs of visitors, taking into account both basic needs and higher needs. Particular attention should be paid to the specific visitor being targeted and their corresponding needs. Additionally, providing attractive displays and coordinating themes and hours of operation will help create a positive shopping experience.



Hermann, Missouri

Retail Operations Improvement (Continued)

Increasing communication between tourism-oriented retail and the wineries, B&Bs, and other attractions in and around Hermann will allow retailers to improve productivity through their increased knowledge of the market. For example, retailers can adjust their hours of operation to open only when necessary. Retailers could base this decision on when the sales volume at attractions and other retailers is highest or when large events are being held.



Maintain and Enhance Diversity of Experience in Downtown Hermann

One of Hermann's strengths is the diversity of attractions and businesses in Downtown. This characteristic distinguishes Hermann from other towns in Missouri, and encourages repeat visits; each visit to Hermann can be completely different from the other. For example, one visit may be to attend a Sunset on the River, another visit may be to go shopping and dine at a winery, or another may be to attend an event and stay at a B&B. In addition, Hermann has history and beautiful views of the Riverfront and streetscapes. Hermann should maintain and promote this characteristic of diversity in its attractions and businesses.

Focus on European Character and Charm

The history and German heritage of Hermann is an asset and important component of the overall tourism draw. Moreover, events, festivals, and wine-making have strong ties to German traditions and heritage. It is important, however, to remember that German traditions and heritage alone will not draw most people to Hermann. Also, perceptions of German food and politics are not always positive.

The opportunity exists for Hermann to focus on its European character and charm, which is also reflected through its German heritage and the surrounding wineries. Hermann should focus on European character, including its German, French and Italian roots. This adds character, charm and authenticity to the visitor experience in Hermann. The European roots are all tied to wine-making, and a broader European character creates more opportunities for food, music and crafts. Finally, the European setting supports romance and the experience of a romantic get-away.



Build on B&Bs and Increase Options



Most of Hermann’s lodging is in the form of B&Bs. Although there are a wide range of accommodations, from modest to luxurious, B&Bs cannot host large numbers of guests and attract a specific audience. While the B&Bs are integral to Hermann’s tourism success, in order to draw more meeting and convention business, there is a need for more traditional hotel options. Hermann will have to make significant improvements in dining, shopping, and lodging if it wants to evolve to a higher level of guest experience

With improved coordination and communication, B&B’s should work with wineries in the region to “package” trips. By bundling the services of the wineries and B&B’s, Hermann can capitalize on extending the stay of visitors and increase the yield from each visit.

Develop Public Transportation System

An important component of a seamless experience is access to safe and reliable transportation. Currently, the majority of visitors travel to Hermann by one of four modes of transportation; 1) personal vehicle, 2) bus or shuttle, 3) train, and 4) bicycle. Visitors arriving by bus, shuttle, or train are left with no other method of transportation once they arrive in Hermann. Additionally, visitors arriving by bicycle or personal vehicle must continue to drive from attraction to attraction. In order to promote a seamless experience, help solve parking and congestion problems at major events, and help extend visitor stays, a public transportation system should be developed. Support for this type of amenity is apparent, as many existing businesses, downtown shops and restaurants recognize the need for this service.



Promote and Develop Katy Trail Connection

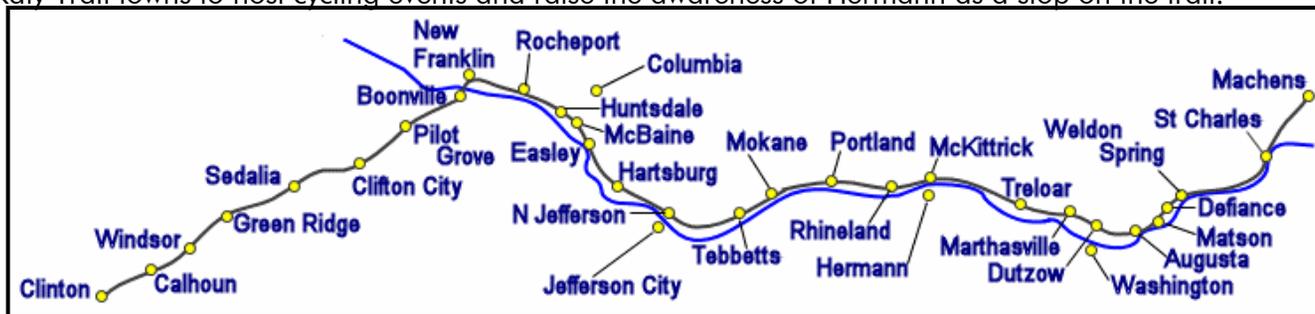
The Katy Trail is a well known and highly regarded brand with a strong connection to Hermann. In light of the new bridge and trail connections, Downtown Hermann is positioned to benefit greatly from cyclists. Improving signage to demarcate the trail and better connects downtown and trail related amenities directly addresses the basic needs of cyclists.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) allows trailhead signs using symbols as well as a “community interest” panel bulletin board on which a community can post information about businesses and events. Cyclists use these bulletin boards to determine locations of interest in the community and typically consider that an establishment that uses the board to be friendly to cyclists. No other advertisement, flyers, or signs are permitted on the Katy Trail State Park right-of-way.



According to a Missouri DNR survey, Katy Trail users tend to be well-educated, high income, family oriented users around 40 years old; an attractive market for Hermann. Users tend to be repeat visitors and primarily use the trail during the day. Additionally, Katy Trail riders found limited availability of drinking water on the trail. Hermann can easily capitalize on this by providing water for Katy Trail riders, getting them off the trail and into Downtown.

Downtown Hermann should promote a bike culture, educate residents to be mindful of cyclists, possibly add a dedicated bike lane through the historic downtown with stops at Downtown attractions and amenities. The bike route should be clearly marked with signage or pavement markings. Katy Trail related activities and attractions take advantage of one Hermann’s most distinguishing assets and can appeal to a family and younger adult audience. In addition, Hermann should continue to actively coordinate with state and regional cycling associations, trail websites, or other Katy Trail towns to host cycling events and raise the awareness of Hermann as a stop on the trail.



Build the Wedding Industry

In order to develop the positioning of Hermann as a romance destination and continue to capitalize on the existing wedding industry business, Hermann should strive to offer a “one-stop-shop” for weddings. When considering the improvement of retail offerings, additional focus should include those that complement the needs of weddings. Websites and stores can offer “Wedding Guides” that include store listings that cater to weddings, a checklist of wedding needs, a schedule for planning a wedding, wedding law requirements, information about renewing vows, etc. The guide can serve as an aid to planning a wedding, in general, and market the opportunities to meet wedding needs in Hermann specifically.



Package Trips and Bundle Experiences

It is important to improve the market information available among businesses and utilize pricing and packaging strategies. Many destinations capitalize on packaging trips and excursions, which helps to market the overall value of a destination. These strategies also serve to make the trip planning process easier for visitors. Potential package trips can include a stay at a local B&B with a visit to a winery, visit to a health spa, horse back riding, art lessons, craft-making, etc. The benefits of packaging include increased visitor spending, length of stay, and greater exposure to Hermann’s offerings.

Develop “Ambassadors” Program

For many visitors, the first stop in Hermann is a winery; not the Visitors Center. Subsequently, many visitors seek the recommendation of employees at the winery or their host/hostess of their B&B. The winery employees and the owners of the B&Bs have become “Ambassadors” for Hermann. The City of Hermann can take advantage of the welcoming and personal interactions visitors have with “Ambassadors” by implementing an internal communications program that addresses the positioning of Hermann and how to present different options and direct visitors to Visitors Center.

The implementation of an internal communications program is something that Hermann can do at minimal cost and with great benefit for the City. Having “ambassadors” at wineries and lodging who can talk about the variety of attractions, shops and restaurants promotes the goodwill of Hermann, provides suggestions that help visitors experience the growing variety of attractions, and ultimately extend their stay in the City. Establishing relationships with visitors reinforces a connection to Hermann and will encourage repeat visits.



CONCLUSIONS, IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE WORK

Hermann has made significant progress in the renovation of Downtown and has many improvements and transformational projects underway. Hermann enjoys a rich mix of arts and regular events that convey a vibrancy that encourages people to visit and stay. Many of the higher level needs of the Destination Hierarchy have been addressed by Hermann. Downtown Hermann and the surrounding region provide memorable, motivational, and comfortable experiences through the existing destination assets. In some cases, individuals may even reach transformational experiences.

However, Hermann’s greatest and most immediate impediment are the very “basic” of the Hierarchy of Needs; that is, the need for wayfinding, signage and public amenities. Downtown is continuing to be beautifully and historically renovated. But, if visitors can’t find Downtown, they will go to another town or use a popular winery as their first stop in Missouri’s wine country. Additionally, if visitors cannot find the basic necessities they need to be comfortable in their visit, they may not stay long or return. In order to enhance the existing tourism assets, these basic needs should be addressed.

Another immediate need, more of an operational need, is improved communication and partnership. Many of the recommendations contained in this report can be accomplished through improved communication among the tourism industry participants and stakeholders. By taking the operational viewpoint of a single destination, as opposed to separate competitors, all interested parties will recognize the benefits of working together. Additionally, once a few partnerships are established more will happen naturally as competitors begin to recognize the benefits.

Overall, Hermann will be able to reap the benefits of a “quick win” by addressing the recommendations that focus on the “basic needs” and “social experiences” of the visitors’ Hierarchy of Needs. Specifically, improving signage and wayfinding and visitor amenities will provide all visitors with a level of comfort and sense of place that will encourage them to visit and stay in Downtown. A formal “Wayfinding” planning process will assist in identifying the key locations and look and feel of appropriate signage. DREAM’s assistance through the Streetscape Guidelines will assist the City in providing wayfinding and aesthetic improvements within the Downtown District. In addition, improving wayfinding and signage in Downtown will make it easier for visitors to enjoy the dining and shopping after a long day of wine tours or festival activities.



Addressing these basic needs will significantly highlight Downtown Hermann, securing its position as the center of the Missouri River Valley wine region and enhance its standing as a Romantic Getaway. Meeting these basic needs will allow visitors to look beyond their comfort and safety needs, and explore the attractions and events that will deliver that “personal” and “enriching” experience that visitors hope to find in a destination.

For Hermann, visitors will be able to repeatedly enjoy the richness and variety of shopping, food, and wine. Additionally, the integration of business operations, improving wayfinding and signage, and providing other and overall provision of visitors’ “basic needs” will provide good customer services. These recommendations will help Hermann to realize its destination potential as the place for a romantic getaway and strengthen the overall visitor experience.

APPENDIX
INVENTORY OF ATTRACTIONS

Inventory of Attractions		
Type of Attraction	Name of Attraction	Comments
Historic Sites/ Points of Interest		
	Deutschheim State Historic Site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pommer-Gentner House • The Strehly House 	Captures the culture and heritage of the Germans who migrated to Missouri in the mid- to late-19th century through exhibits and galleries of changing artifacts and photographs.
	German School Museum	The arts and crafts of yesteryear are well preserved in the Historic Hermann Museum rooms at the German School. Built in 1871, the building served as Hermann's elementary school until 1955. The town clock has been operating since 1890.
	Gasconade County Historical Society Archives & Records Center	The ARC is housed in the old Farmers & Merchants Bank building, which was built in 1909. The ARC goal is to be a one-stop research facility for anyone curious about the lives of citizens of Gasconade County --- past and present.
	Hermann Fire Company Museum	The museum was established in 1971 when station #2 was dedicated. The volunteers salvaged and restored old fire equipment that had been stored in sheds throughout Hermann.
	Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows (Starkenber, MO)	Exquisite landmark, including St. Martin's Church which was founded in 1848.

INVENTORY OF ATTRACTIONS

Inventory of Attractions		
Type of Attraction	Name of Attraction	Address & Phone Number
Bed & Breakfast		
	A Carriage House B & B	112 E 2nd ; 573-486-0447
	A Secret Vine B&B	304 Schiller ; 314-805-7746
	Abigail's Grape Leaf Bed and Breakfast LLC	206 Schiller St ; 573-486-9070
	Acorn B&B	236 W 4th ; 218-393-0421
	Alpenhorn Gasthaus	179 Hwy 100 E ; 573-486-8228
	Angels Bed & Breakfast	108 E. Second St ; 888-264-3553
	Apfelbaum Cottage	138 W 5th St ; 314-757-6276
	Apprill's Getaway Suites	212 Schiller ; 314-609-0808
	Aunt May's Farm Guesthouse	3593 Hwy E ; 573-237-2865
	B & B Tween Steeples	328 East 8th St ; 877-278-9127
	Birk's Gasthaus	700 Goethe Street ; 888-701-2495
	Campbell Haus B&B	225 E 4th ; 573-486-1093
	Captain Wohlt Inn	123 E 3rd ; 573-486-3357
	Captain's Cottage	215 West 2nd St. ; 573-486-2222
	Captain's Neighbor	116 East 3rd St. ; 573-486-3357
	Captain's Suites	119 East 3rd St. ; 573-486-3357
	CAT NAP INN	409 Schiller ; 877-499-7446
	Cobbler Room & Cottage B&B & Massage	109 E 3rd ; 573-486-2510
	DeFlorin Haus B&B	214 West 4th ; 573-486-5487
	Drewarosa B&B	2175 Shady Lane ; 314-968-0906
	Esther's Ausblick B&B	236 West 2nd St. ; 573-486-2170
	EVIE'S Wild Grapevine Suites	101 E 4th St ; 314-808-3756

INVENTORY OF ATTRACTIONS

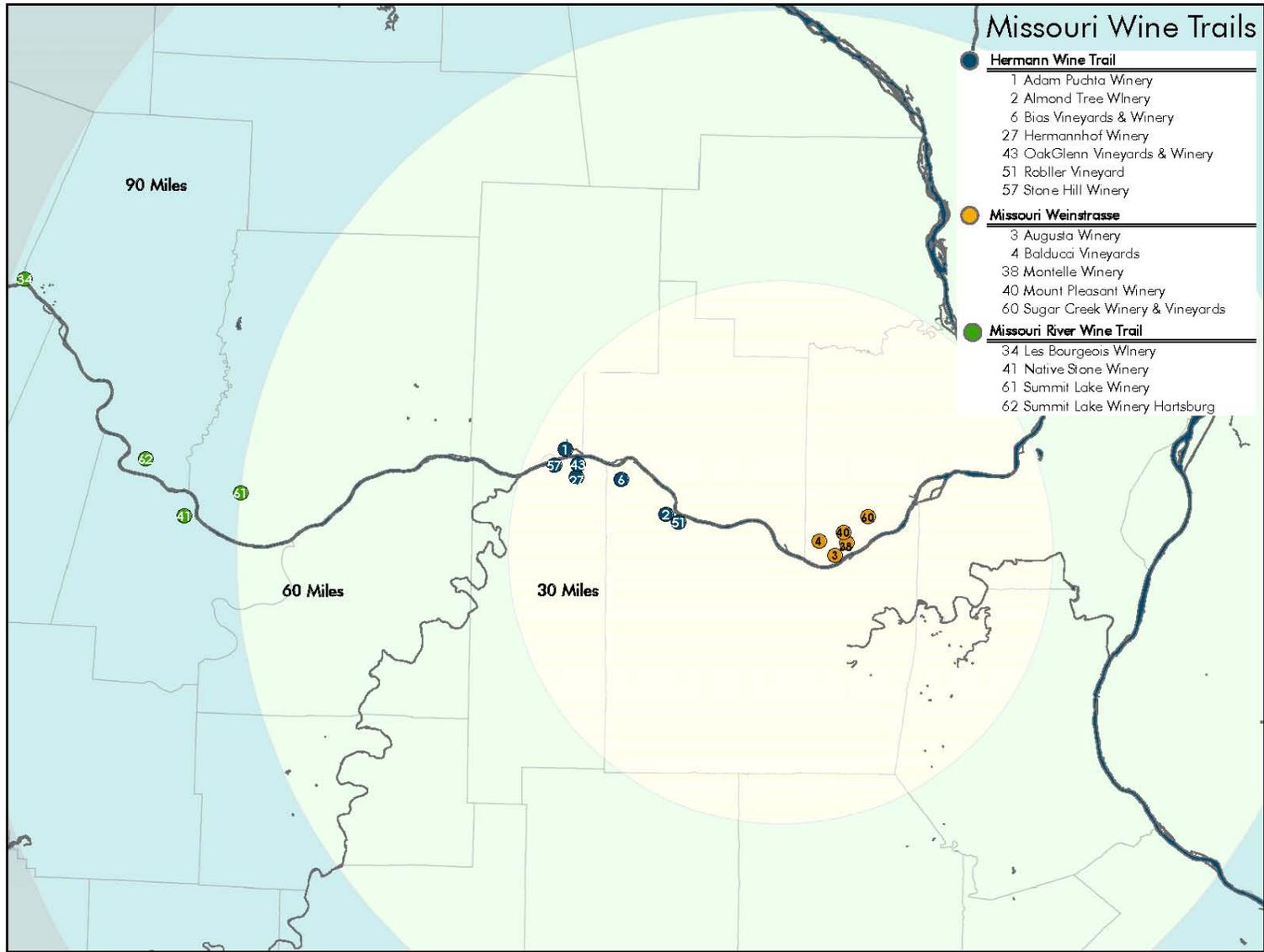
Type of Attraction	Name of Attraction	Address & Phone Number
Bed & Breakfast		
	Gatzemeyer Guesthouse	222 E 2nd ; 573-486-2635
	Grapevine Guest Suite	401 Schiller ; 573-834-5833
	Gray Stone Guest House	202 W 6th ; 573-486-5758
	Harbor Haus Inn & Suites	113 Market Street ; 573-486-2222
	Healing Stone Retreat & Spa	78 Brown Rd ; 573-486-5000
	Herb Mueller Suites	Market St. ; 573-486-2222
	Heritage Lodging	200 East 1st St. ; 573-486-3137
	Hermann Bluff Guest House	603 W. 4th Street ; 573-486-2087
	Hermann Hill Vineyard and Inn	711 Wein ; 573-486-4455
	Historic Iron Horse Inn B&B	207 E. 4th St. ; 573-486-9152
	Klos B & B	218 East 1st ; 636-448-4927
	Kolbe Guest House	214 Wharf Street ; 573-486-3453
	LaBoube Farms	Hwy H ; 573-486-5100
	Les Lavandes	215 Hwy P ; 573-236-4774
	Loutre Valley Farm Guest House	352 Bader Rd ; 573-291-7865
	Lydia Johnson Inn	204 Market ; 573-486-0110
	Market Street B&B	210 Market Street ; 573-486-5597
	Meyer's Hilltop Farm B&B	20 Maggie's Lane ; 573-486-5778
	Montague's B&B	301 Schiller St. ; 573-486-2035
	Mumbrauer Gasthaus	223 E 2nd ; 573-486-5246
	Mundwiller Inn	409 Washington St ; 877-744-0849
	Murphy's Bed and Breakfast	120 East 3rd ; 573-486-8847

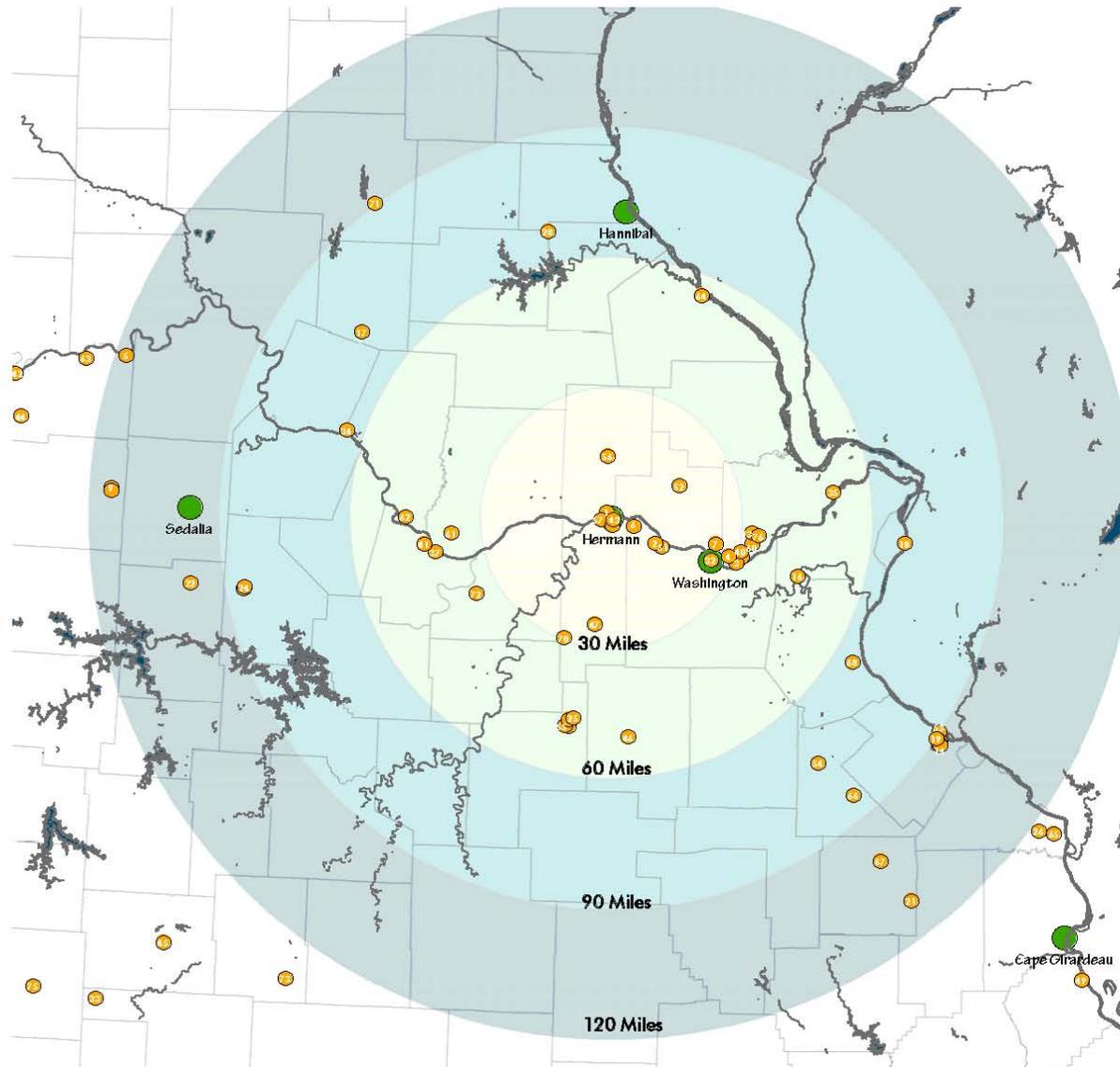
INVENTORY OF ATTRACTIONS

Type of Attraction	Name of Attraction	Address & Phone Number
Bed & Breakfast		
	Nestle Inn	215 W. Second St ; 573-486-1111
	Neufeld-Davies B&B	317 W 6th ; 573-486-0154
	River Suites	215 W. 2nd St. ; 573-486-5893
	Schiller Guest Suites	115 Schiller ; 573-486-1010
	Serenity Place	1011 Market Street ; 877-543-0199
	Spirit Hill Guest House	501 W 4th ; 314-280-9943
	Stone Haus B&B	107 Bayer Rd ; 573-486-9169
	Stuff & Nonsense Guest House	PO Box 162 ; 573-486-4444
	The Chalet	215 W. 2nd St. ; 573-486-2222
	The Inn at Hermannhof	237 East 1st St. ; 888-268-1422
	The Stone Giraffe	Hwy H ; 573-486-5100
	Villa at Hermann	2094 Frene Creek Rd ; 573-486-5515
	Weber-Schulte Guesthouse	229 East 4th ; 573-486-1010
	White Roses B&B	311 Market St. ; 573-486-9094
	Wine Valley Inn	403 Market ; 573-486-0706
	Wohlt House B&B	415 E 1st ; 573-486-2394
	Zimmer mit Fruehstueck	127 W 3rd ; 573-486-5084

INVENTORY OF ATTRACTIONS

Inventory of Attractions		
Type of Attraction	Name of Attraction	Comments
Wineries & Breweries		
	Stone Hill Winery	Open daily; tours available; restaurant on-site; gift shop; facilities available for weddings and meetings.
	Hermannhof Winery	Open daily; tours available; gift shop; facilities available for weddings and meetings; on-site overnight accommodations.
	Adam Puchta Winery	Open daily
	Oak Glenn Vineyards and Winery	Open daily
	Bias Vineyards and Gruhlke's Microbrewery (Berger, MO)	Open daily; weekly live entertainment; facility available for weddings and meetings.
	Bommarito Estate Almond Tree Winery (New Haven, MO)	Open daily
	Röbller Vineyard and Winery (New Haven, MO)	Open daily; seasonal live entertainment; available for weddings.
	Tin Mill Brewery	Open daily





Location of Missouri Wineries Hermann, Missouri

ID	Winery Name
1	Adam Puchta Winery
2	Almond Tree Winery
3	Augusta Winery
4	Babucci Vineyards
5	Baltimore Bend Vineyard
6	Bas Vineyards & Winery
7	Blaumhof Vineyards
8	Bonanza Spring Winery
9	Bristle Ridge Vineyard & Winery
10	Buffalo Creek Vineyard & Winery
11	Bynum Winery
12	Cave Vineyard
13	Charoller Hill Vineyards
14	Charleville Vineyard Winery
15	Chaumette Vineyards & Winery
16	Claverich Farm & Vineyards
17	Cooper's Oak Winery
18	Coppa Urban Winery
19	Crown Valley Port House
20	Crown Valley Winery
21	Dusoo Hills
22	Eschelberg Winery
23	Ferrigno Vineyards & Winery
24	Grey Bear Vineyards & Winery
25	Heinrichshaus Vineyard & Winery
26	Herman Winery
27	Hermanhof Winery
28	Johan Creek Winery
29	Inland Seas Wines
30	Jowler Creek Winery
31	Kellou Vineyard
32	La Duke Vitis Winery
33	La Cave Vineyards
34	Les Bourgeois Winery
35	Little Hills Winery
36	Mesanez Vineyards
37	Missouri Wine & Grape Board
38	Montelle Winery
39	Montseriat Vineyards
40	Mount Pleasant Winery
41	Native Stone Winery
42	New Oak Vineyards
43	Olderens Vineyards & Winery
44	Odessa Country Winery
45	OOVVA Winery
46	Peaceful Bend Vineyard
47	Phoenix Winery & Vineyards
48	Piedle Winery
49	River Ridge Winery
50	Riverwood Winery
51	Robler Vineyard
52	Rolling Meadows Vineyards
53	Sainte Genevieve Winery
54	St. Francois Vineyards
55	St. James Winery
56	Stone Hill Winery
57	Stone Hill Winery
58	Stone Hill Winery Branson
59	Stordhaus Farms Winery
60	Sugar Creek Winery & Vineyards
61	Summit Lake Winery
62	Summit Lake Winery Harburg
63	Terre Beau Vineyards
64	The Eagle's Nest Winery
65	Tower Rock Winery
66	Twin Oaks Vineyard & Winery
67	Vance Vineyard & Winery
68	Villa Antonio Winery
69	Vinograd
70	Winwood Farm Winery
71	West Winery
72	Westphala Vineyards
73	Whispering Oaks Vineyard & Winery
74	White Rose Winery
75	Williams Creek Winery
76	Yellow Farmhouse Vineyard